

We need to empower voters and Congresswoman SEWELL'S bill—the Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 2867)—would do just that.

Now—we often talk about how states in the south like Alabama have laws threatening voting rights. But this is still an issue around the country, including in California.

While California has implemented many policies that improve access to the ballot box, including vote-by-mail, automatic voter registration and expanded absentee voting—we are not perfect.

Three California counties—Kings County, Monterey County and Yuba County—were covered by the section 5 of the Voting Rights Act before the Shelby decision—meaning they needed preclearance from the Justice Department before changing voting rules or jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, we must restore the preclearance process to prevent voter discrimination and disenfranchisement before it happens—not after.

It is clear—our democracy is in a crisis. There is an assault against voting rights and we must come together to stop it.

My Democratic colleagues and the Congressional Black Caucus are serious about protecting voting rights and pass the Voting Rights Advancement Act. It is past time that all Republicans in Congress join our efforts to protect the foundation of our democracy: the right to vote.

Our work is not over until the voice of EVERY American is equally heard.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 24, 2016

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5055) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes:

Ms. LEE. Mr. Chair, let me thank the Ranking Member and Chair for including language to recognize the importance of workplace diversity in the Department of Energy's National Laboratories and directing the Department to provide a detailed plan on the recruitment and retention with minority-serving institutions, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

I am also pleased that the bill includes language on Energy-Water Nexus initiative that I worked on with our Ranking Member MARCY KAPTUR. This language encourages the Department of Energy to enter into an agreement with the Department of Agriculture at various national labs to work on development of affordable and efficient food production systems for our most food insecure communities. This is a critical step towards addressing food insecurity and poverty.

Lastly, I'm pleased that the Advanced Light Source program is fully funded in this bill at the level of \$64.95 million in FY2017. This \$2

million increase over FY 2016 enacted levels will ensure that these facilities remain fully operational, including the Advanced Light Source and Molecular Foundry at Lawrence Berkeley National Lab in my home district.

However, I remain deeply concerned regarding the many poison pill policy riders and low funding levels included in this spending bill.

We know that California is experiencing an unprecedented drought coupled with the real effects of climate change. The fact that most of H.R. 2898, the Western Water and American Food Security Act of 2015, has shamefully been inserted into this bill is a disgrace. This harmful rider fails to adequately address critical elements of California's complex water challenges and will only worsen the effects of the drought. It would also violate existing laws protecting salmon and other endangered fish in California's Bay-Delta estuary.

I am also concerned regarding the other harmful policy riders that would shamefully allow guns on Army Corps of Engineers land and prevent implementation of the administration's Clean Water Rule.

Mr. Chairman, instead of trying to roll back vital environmental protections, we need to be proactive about preserving our environment for the health and safety of future generations. We need to make more investments in clean energy like solar, wind, and geothermal. Unfortunately, this bill does not do that.

I hope that as the process moves forward, these terrible policy riders and low allocations are resolved.

CLARIFYING CONGRESSIONAL INTENT IN PROVIDING FOR DC HOME RULE ACT OF 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 25, 2016

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ardently oppose H.R. 5233, wrongfully entitled the "Clarifying Congressional Intent in Providing for DC Home Rule Act of 2016." H.R. 5233 seeks to repeal a District of Columbia referendum, approved by a super-majority of D.C. residents, 83 percent, to allow the local D.C. government to implement its own local budget. To be clear, implement its own local budget after a 30-day congressional review period. This legislation does not preserve the authority of Congress, the 30-day congressional review period already does that, rather it subjects the local D.C. government to the arduous appropriations process to use tax dollars from its own residents.

Why, Mr. Speaker, would we choose to overturn the will of the local D.C. electorate to spend their tax dollars as they choose? Optically, it does not look right. Substantively, it is not right, and, legislatively, we are on the wrong track.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5233 is a move in the wrong direction away from granting the residents of D.C. increased self-determination and home-rule.

ISAAC MONTANO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2016

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Isaac Montano for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award.

Isaac Montano is a 9th grader at Pomona High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Isaac Montano is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Isaac Montano for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

REMEMBERING THE PALESTINE FLOOD VICTIMS

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2016

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in somber tone. I wanted to take a moment to remember six lives that were recently lost in Texas' 5th Congressional District.

On April 29th, East Texas experienced a storm system that swept through during the latter part of the day into the evening and night. During the early Saturday morning hours, the city of Palestine in Anderson County, Texas had reports of 7.5 inches of rain that fell in less than an hour. Several homes were destroyed in the neighborhoods, businesses flooded and ultimately lives were changed forever.

I would like to take a moment to remember Lenda Asberry and her great-grandchildren: Jamonicka Johnson, 6, Von Anthony Johnson Jr., 7, Devonte Asberry, 8, and Venetia Asberry, 9. Also, Giovanni Olivas, 30, who leaves behind a wife and two children. Spouses, children, parents, aunts, uncles, friends, neighbors, teachers, all left to grieve for these loved ones.

Let us all remember in our thoughts and prayers these families, businesses and the city of Palestine's people as they rebuild their property and lives.

FY17 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 26, 2016

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment with the way the Majority has undermined the welfare of our troops